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WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION  
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DIRECTOR'S MEMORANDUM NO. 63

1943-44 Community Food Preservation Program

One of the major responsibilities of the Food Distribution Administration is to secure more efficient utilization of our civilian food supply. Owing to the millions of new victory gardens, general production increases and shortages of labor, transportation, materials and processing facilities, local surpluses and wastages frequently occur during peak marketing periods even, in many instances, in the midst of national shortages. As one means of effecting conservation and better use of our fresh fruit and vegetable production, the Civilian Food Requirements Branch will be responsible for promoting the development of a Community Food Preservation Program. The program was initiated to meet the demands of communities, particularly in urban areas, for facilities to process fruits and vegetables for home and school lunch use. It has proved to be an effective means of utilizing local surpluses and is an excellent potential outlet for produce purchased under Section 32 price support programs.

This program will be developed with three broad objectives in mind:

1. To promote food conservation and utilization of our fresh fruit and vegetable supplies by encouraging the establishment of community canning centers wherever there is an abundance of fresh produce, particularly in connection with farmers' markets and shipping points and in urban areas where victory gardeners have grown produce in excess of their immediate needs.
2. To provide outlets for commodities purchased under FDA price support programs. Such outlets have already been used on a limited basis. Arrangements will be made with all canning centers which can conveniently handle carload lots on short notice. The finished product, of course, will be furnished to schools and where possible to welfare recipients.
3. To improve the community school lunch program by (a) assisting sponsors of such programs to properly preserve foods grown in school gardens, donated by victory gardeners or otherwise acquired, and by (b) making available a more varied and economical supply of foods for school lunches.

The Civilian Food Requirements Branch will develop national policy and plans for the preservation program in close collaboration with the Extension Service, which is concerned with food preservation in rural homes; and with the Office of Education, which is engaged in training programs through public schools, chiefly in rural areas. The Branch will assume initiating responsibility for (1) maintaining outlets for conservation of foods secured under price support and other purchasing programs, (2) preparing and presenting equipment requirements for the program and supervising the distribution of equipment manufactured, (3) providing printed information and instructions regarding the establishment and operation of food preservation centers, (4) furnishing technical consultants to work with regional and state representatives, (5) prescribing the reports which are necessary in connection with the operation of the program, and (6) arranging for the sponsorship of a limited number of food preservation training workshops.

As soon as possible there should be established and maintained a register of all centers which can serve as outlets for FDA commodities. A survey form to be used for this purpose is being worked out at this time.

We will continue our present policy of liquidating our inventory of food processing equipment which was purchased from the Work Projects Administration by arranging for its sale to such agencies as State Departments of Education. These transfers should be completed by March 31, 1944, and, until such transfers are made, the equipment should continue to be loaned to communities. During the period that this equipment remains in our hands, no administrative funds shall be used for the warehousing, repairing or inspection of such equipment, except that which is necessary to prevent this property of the Government from becoming unusable, or in order to protect the property until such time as it may be disposed of as surplus.

Regional offices will assume the responsibility for effectively coordinating and developing the food preservation program within the states in accordance with instructions, suggestions and program policy set forth by the Civilian Food Requirements Branch. A great deal can be accomplished with a limited staff working with representatives of state agencies engaged in food preservation work. Assistance should be provided to all communities and organizations with equipment problems and technical problems incident to the operation of food preservation centers. Allotments are being made to the regional offices for this work.

*Roy F. Hendrickson*  
Director

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